

Fiscal Note

Fiscal Services Division



HF 534 – School Hours and Start Date Changes (LSB 1686HV)
Analyst: Shawn Snyder (Phone: 515-281-7799) (shawn.snyder@legis.state.ia.us)
Fiscal Note Version – New
Requested by Representative Dennis M. Cohoon

Description

House File 534 changes school instruction requirements from a minimum of 180 days to a minimum of 1,080 hours. The Bill also eliminates the statutory start date, the innovative calendar, and the requirement for an early start date waiver.

Background

Currently, school districts are required to be in session for a minimum of 180 days, with a minimum school day defined as 5.5 hours.

Based on a March 4, 2011, on-line poll taken by the Iowa School Finance Information Services (117 school districts participated), the following information was obtained:

- 100.0% of the responding districts reported a school calendar of 180 days or more.
- School calendar total hour ranges (not including professional development or lunches) included:
 - 6.0% of the districts reported between 990 and 1,034 hours
 - 13.0% reported between 1,035 and 1,079 hours
 - 24.0% reported between 1,080 and 1,124 hours
 - 33.0% reported 1,125 or more hours
 - 24.0% were uncertain

Assumptions

- Based on the on-line poll, the LSA estimates that 270 districts (75.2%) are currently meeting the new minimum instruction requirements of the Bill. The LSA assumes that these districts will not be impacted by the Bill.
- If school districts have a minimum school day of 6.5 hours of instructional time, the number of instructional contact days required to meet the 1,080-hour requirement would be 167 days. The LSA estimates that 24.8% of school districts will be required to increase instruction hours to meet the minimum amount of 1,080 hours; these districts may be able to reduce the number of instructional contact days below the current minimum of 180 days.
- There may be cost savings as a result of the reduced number of contact days. This may include transportation costs and school facility operational costs. However, this amount is unknown and is dependent on how school districts administer new district calendars.
- This estimate assumes that adjustments will be made to teacher contract days as required to adjust to the minimum hour requirement. Based on Department of Education staff data from 2010-2011, no district had average teacher contact days of less than 180.5 days and the statewide average was 191.6 days. Based on the current average contract day data, the LSA estimates that **HF 534** will not result in an increase in teacher contract days.
- The Bill mandates that school districts meet the minimum hour requirement. There may be a fiscal impact due to this requirement if any district is impacted by unscheduled breaks in the district calendar (inclement weather, building maintenance issues, etc.). Hours may be

made up by adjusting the daily schedule or adding instructional days to the school district calendar. However, the number of these occurrences and any fiscal impact due to these occurrences is unknown.

Fiscal Impact

The estimated fiscal impact of [HF 534](#) is currently unknown. The Bill may provide cost savings due to adjusted school district calendars and any efficiencies that may result. Additionally, any hours that need to be made up due to unscheduled breaks in the district calendar may add additional costs to school districts. Any fiscal impact resulting from this Bill would not occur until FY 2013.

Sources

Iowa Department of Education
Iowa School Finance Information Services
Iowa Association of School Boards

/s/ Holly M. Lyons

March 16, 2011

The fiscal note for this bill was prepared pursuant to **Joint Rule 17** and the correctional and minority impact statements were prepared pursuant to Code **Section 2.56**. Data used in developing this fiscal note is available from the Fiscal Services Division of the Legislative Services Agency upon request.
